



South Dakota Department of the Military
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



2013 UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS MEMORIAL SERVICES SCHEDULED

The Black Hills National Cemetery has released their schedule for the 2013 Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Services – a service for any veteran who arrived alone and was buried or cremated without a proper military ceremony.

The services are scheduled to take place on the first Monday of the first month of each quarter.

The brief military committal services are scheduled to start at 9:00 am and will be held January 7, April 1, July 1, and October 7 at the Black Hills National Cemetery (20901 Pleasant Valley Drive in Sturgis). During the service, the only sounds attendees will hear are the veterans' names being read, the three-volley salute, the clinking of ejected shells hitting cement and taps sounding.

All 125 national cemeteries do something to recognize veterans buried without family present. For smaller ones, that may mean a ceremony on Memorial Day. For larger ones, it may be a daily remembrance.

On average, 40 to 50 veterans are buried unaccompanied at Black Hills National Cemetery every year.



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VA REGISTERS “GI BILL” AS A TRADEMARK

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs announced that GI Bill is now a registered trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the VA is the sole owner of the mark.

“We will continue to support our veterans by helping them obtain the best education of their choosing—a right for which they have bravely served, and which they have truly earned,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “We all want veterans to be informed consumers in their educational pursuit.”

On April 26, 2012, President Obama signed Executive Order 13607, directing the VA, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Education to undertake a number of measures to “stop deceptive and misleading” promotional efforts that target the GI Bill educational benefits of service-members, veterans, and eligible family members and survivors.

One of the key components of the order was for the VA to register the term “GI Bill” as a trademark in order to protect individuals and ensure they are directed to the right resources to make informed decisions.

In addition, the VA obtained the rights to the *GIBill.com* website after the original owners agreed to give up the site. The VA is taking a proactive approach in continuously taking action to eliminate fraudulent marketing and recruiting practices.

The VA will issue terms of use for “GI Bill” within the next six months. Their goal is to ensure the right balance with these new guidelines so that their stakeholders can still promote GI Bill and they can prohibit others from using it fraudulently.

Since August 2009, the VA has paid over \$23.8 billion in Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to over 866,000 veterans, servicemembers, and dependents. The VA received over 478,000 Fall 2012 enrollments for Post-9/11 GI Bill.

For more information on GI Bill programs, please visit www.gibill.va.gov.

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Upcoming Events

Dec. 7—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Watertown American Legion —1:00 pm
Dec. 8—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Sioux Falls DAV Hdqtrs—1:00 pm
Dec. 15—Wreaths Across America
Jan. 1—Happy New Year
Jan. 8—SD 88th Legislative Session Opens
Jan. 8—Governor Daugaard's State of the State Address
Feb. 4—VFW Legislative Reception
Feb. 5—American Legion Legislative Reception

SANTA TO VISIT SDNG MUSEUM

Enjoy a historic holiday with your children and grandchildren at the South Dakota National Guard Museum (301 E. Dakota Avenue) in Pierre on Sat., Dec. 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"Children will have the opportunity to visit with Santa Claus, listen to holiday music, and view the holiday decorations," said Sonja Johnson, museum director. "As always, we encourage all visitors to explore the museum at their own pace and stay as long as they like."

The National Guard Museum's mission is to preserve and honor the history of the South Dakota National Guard from the days of Dakota Territory (1860s) to the present day, with emphasis on the various wars and conflicts. The goal is to create a greater understanding of the significant role played by the South Dakota National Guard throughout history by caring for and preserving collections of historical documents and artifacts.



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